

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 17676

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW, WB

SUBJECT: BONN'S BERLIN POLICY-MAKING APPARATUS

SUMMARY. BONN'S BERLIN POLICY-MAKING APPARATUS HAS
TENDED IN RECENT YEARS TO BE CREAKY AND OCCASIONALLY
SEEMINGLY NOT FULLY ATTUNED TO WEST BERLIN INTERESTS.
THIS WAS THE CASE EVEN WHEN BRANDT AND HIS SO-CALLED
BERLIN MAFIA WERE IN THE CHANCELLERY. FOLLOWING THEIR
DEPARTURE FROM THE SCENE LAST MAY, HOWEVER, A DEARTH OF
SENIOR BERLIN POLICY-MAKERS WITH EXPERTISE AND POLITICAL
CLOUT HAS BECOME APPARENT. AS A RESULT, BERLIN POLICY
NOW TENDS TO BE MADE BY LESS SENIOR OFFICIALS WHO CARRY
RELATIVELY LITTLE WEIGHT, AND BERLIN GOVERNING MAYOR
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SCHUETZ HAS BEEN ABLE TO ASSERT HIMSELF INCREASINGLY IN

A VETO ROLE OVER FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS AFFECTING BERLIN. WE BELIEVE SCHUETZ WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE THIS ROLE IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE' END SUMMARY.

1. IN TALKING TO OFFICIALS AND OBSERVERS THESE DAYS IN BONN, ONE IS STRUCK BY THE LACK OF TOP PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT CREATING, CONDUCTING AND COORDINATING BERLIN POLICY. BERLIN HAS ALWAYS BEEN A HEADACHE FOR ANY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. POLICIES FOR THE CITY TENDED OFTEN TO BE MADE ON AN AD HOC BASIS AND USUALLY IN A CRISIS ATMOSPHERE. THIS IS EVEN MORE THE CASE TODAY. BUT WHAT SEEMS TO BE LACKING NOWADAYS IS A GENERAL CONCEPT OF WHAT BONN WANTS FOR BERLIN. WITH THE CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES IN BERLIN SINCE THE CONCLUSION OF THE QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT IN 1971, THE CRISIS ATMOSPHERE HAS BEEN DISSIPATED AND THE CITY IS PRESENTLY IN SEARCH OF A NEW ROLE FOR ITSELF. NOBODY IN BONN, BERLIN OR THE ALLIED CAPITALS YET SEEMS TO BE CLEAR AS TO WHAT THIS SHOULD BE.

2. WITH THE DEPARTURE FROM THE CHANCELLERY THIS PAST SUMMER OF THE BRANDT-BAHR-GRABERT BERLIN MAFIA, A GOOD DEAL OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD OF BERLIN POLICY-MAKING DISAPPEARED. NOW, SUCH POLICY-MAKING AS THERE IS TENDS TO BE CENTERED IN THE HANDS OF LESS SENIOR PEOPLE, SUCH AS CHANCELLERY AIDE SANNE, INNER-GERMAN AFFAIRS MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVE WEICHERT AND FONOFF OFFICIAL BLECH. THESE ARE ALL COMPETENT AND EXPERIENCED MEN BUT THEY LACK POLITICAL POWER IN BONN. THEY ARE ALSO NOT BERLINERS AND THUS ARE NOT IDENTIFIED BY THE BERLINERS AS SUPPORTERS OF BERLIN INTERESTS. (THIS LEAVES ASIDE THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE BERLINERS FULLY TRUSTED BRANDT-BAHR-GRABERT. IN THE LATTER YEARS OF THE BRANDT GOVERNMENT, THIS TRUST HAD WEAKENED SIGNIFICANTLY; THE BERLINERS CONSIDERED THESE INDIVIDUALS READY TO SELL OUT BERLIN'S INTERESTS TO PROMOTE THE SUCCESS OF OSTPOLITIK.)

3. SCHMIDT HIMSELF DOES NOT APPEAR DEEPLY INTERESTED
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PERSONALLY IN BERLIN. HIS VISITS THERE AND SPEECHES ON BERLIN MATTERS SEEM ALMOST PRO FORMA; HE MAKES ALL THE RIGHT NOISES, OBVIOUSLY FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS, BUT HIS HEART DOES NOT APPEAR IN THEM. EGON BAHR, THE OTHER FIGURE SO CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH BERLIN POLICY IN RECENT YEARS, IS NOW THE DEVELOPMENT AID MINISTER. HE HAS BECOME MUCH MALIGNED, HOWEVER, AND IS NOW MUCH LESS CLOSE TO BERLIN AND OSTPOLITIK PROBLEMS,

SO AS NOT TO CREATE A TARGET FOR ATTACK BY THE
OPPOSITION AND THE RIGHT WING OF THE SPD. UNDOUBTEDLY,
HE PROVIDES OCCASIONAL ADVICE TO SCHMIDT AND PROBABLY
EVEN MORE TO HIS FORMER AIDE, SANNE, ON BERLIN-RELATED
ISSUES, BUT THAT SEEMS TO BE THE EXTENT OF HIS INVOLVE-
MENT. FONMIN GENSCHER HAS ATTEMPTED TO ASSUME THE
MANTLE OF BERLIN'S PROTECTOR IN BONN, BUT HIS EFFORTS
HAVE NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY CONVINCING. HIS USE OF THE
CITY FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES IS TOO

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APPARENT AND, BESIDES, HE IS OBVIOUSLY NOT EXPERT IN
BERLIN AFFAIRS.

4. THE TWO SENIOR OFFICIAL BERLIN REPRESENTATIVES WITH A VOICE IN BONN ARE SENATOR STOBBE, THE SENATOR FOR FEDERAL AFFAIRS, AND DIETER SPANGENBERG, THE FEDERAL PLENIPOTENTIARY IN BERLIN. BOTH ARE FAR FROM THE CENTER OF POWER IN THE SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT AND HENCE PLAY A LIMITED ROLE, ALTHOUGH STOBBE IS AN ACTIVE AND TALENTED YOUNG POLITICIAN WHO COULD DEVELOP A MORE INFLUENTIAL PLACE FOR HIMSELF WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME. FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE GAUS IN EAST BERLIN IS NOT ABLE TO PLAY MUCH OF A PART IN THE BERLIN GAME: HE IS USED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MORE AS THE TRANSMITTAL

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CHANNEL BETWEEN BONN AND EAST BERLIN. HIS INFLUENCE ON BERLIN MATTERS APPEARS, SO FAR, TO BE MARGINAL.

5. THE PERSON PRESENTLY CARRYING THE MOST WEIGHT IN THE BERLIN POLICY-MAKING FIELD IS THEREFORE, ALMOST BY DEFAULT, GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ. HIS ROLE IS NOT NECESSARILY A CREATIVE ONE IN THE SENSE OF IMAGINATIVELY FORMULATING POLICY; HE HAS MORE OF A VETO ROLE, WHEREIN HE IS ABLE TO BLOCK INITIATIVES FROM BONN THAT HE CONSIDERS INIMICAL TO WEST BERLIN'S INTERESTS. THIS SORT OF POSITION WAS CLEAR IN THE RECENT HASSLE OVER THE FRG'S CONSIDERATION OF THE GDR CURRENCY EXCHANGE REQUIREMENTS (BONN 14874), WHERE SCHUETZ APPARENTLY PREVENTED THE GOVERNMENT FROM ACCEPTING CERTAIN GDR PROPOSALS. TO BE FAIR, SCHUETZ BEGAN TO ASSERT THIS BLOCKING ROLE EVEN WHILE BRANDT WAS CHANCELLOR, GOING OUT OF HIS WAY TO PROTECT BERLIN'S INTERESTS IN THE BONN POLICY-MAKING AND IMPLEMENTING APPARATUS.

6. SCHUETZ'S CLOUT STEMS LARGELY FROM THE FACT THAT THE SPD BADLY NEEDS AN ELECTORAL VICTORY IN BERLIN NEXT MARCH. ONLY SCHUETZ CAN DELIVER THAT, SO SCHMIDT, WHO DOES NOT LIKE SCHUETZ PERSONALLY, WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BOW TO THE POLITICAL NEEDS OF THE MOMENT AND ALLOW THE MAYOR TO REPRESENT BERLIN INTERESTS IN HARDHEADED FASHION. WHETHER SCHUETZ WILL BE ABLE TO PLAY THE SAME ROLE ON BERLIN MATTERS AFTER MARCH IS OPEN TO SOME QUESTION. OUR VIEW IS THAT, BARRING AN UNEXPECTED ELECTORAL DEFEAT, HE WILL, SIMPLY BECAUSE THERE WILL BE NOBODY IN THE CHANCELLERY (SHORT OF SCHMIDT) OR THE MINISTRIES ABLE TO MATCH HIS POWER OR EVEN WITH A DESIRE TO TRY.

7. THIS ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION SUGGESTS THAT THE US SHOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHUETZ, FOR HE LOOKS AS IF HE WILL BE THE KEY FIGURE IN BERLIN POLITICS IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE--

AND BERLIN WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO BE AN IMPORTANT
ASPECT OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE FRG AND IN EAST-WEST
RELATIONS GENERALLY.

HILLENBRAND
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